Justice? That Ain’t It, Chief

The Editors

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America can't stand the retributive injustice of identity politics.

Identity politics has breached the confines of the ivory tower, David Azerrad argues in an important new essay. Now, it holds sway over nearly all of public life. Today, writes Azerrad, “we all learn to distinguish the victimized groups who should be honored from the oppressor groups who must perpetually atone for the sins of their forefathers.”

“There are still, of course, other ways of looking at reality in America today, but none so thoroughly dominates the public square as identity politics. While it has not fully conquered the public’s mind, it does reign almost unchallenged among the elites. Politicians, professors, producers, pundits, *Fortune* 500 CEOs, tech gurus, journalists, and the coterie of other famous, credentialed, and successful people who comprise our ruling class all worship at the altar.”

Writing in response, Eric Kaufmann dissects the ideology’s contradictory commandment that majority groups disown their identity and minorities cling to theirs; Diana Schaub invokes Frederick Douglass in a call to accept the challenge of truly equal justice; Kevin Slack argues that identity politics is the perfect ideology for a ruling class looking to sideline and disenfranchise those beneath them; William Voegeli rejects the redistribution of punishment guilt-ridden elites inflict on those they rule; and Thomas G. West traces the moral basis of identity politics to the political theory of the contemporary liberal thinkers John Rawls, Ronald Dworkin, and Richard Rorty.

The Editors of The American Mind.